

Letters

EDITOR THE PRESS:
In view of your concern for our local school system I am submitting a letter pertaining to last night's board meeting.

Apparently our school board and administration let some of the "Tight Budget" money get away recently. It was announced by Dr. Hull that "We might get some money back" . . . there was "collusion in the bids." He was referring to a rather inconspicuous appearing item in the Aug. 16, 1960 agenda entitled "AUTHORIZATION FOR THE CONDUCT OF LEGAL PROCEEDINGS ON BEHALF OF TORRANCE UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT (FOLDING BLEACHERS)," under Business and financial procedures.

Such losses might be reduced to zero dollars if the respectable school board practice of opening bids in public at school board meetings on large cost items were utilized.

This item might seem small indeed to a superintendent who, that very night, reflects on a \$10,000,000 bond repayment schedule over the next few years, and further is somewhat responsible for a current year budget of about \$10,000,000.

As for further information on this item, the assistant superintendent in charge of business was absent so I assumed questions would have been difficult to answer.

In this same area of the agenda, there were two contracts let with absolutely no comment or question whatsoever by the board in its approval of these two action items.

Last year at this time there was considerable discussion over the dairy products contracts. At that time the assistant superintendent alluded to a local dairyman's threat to "discontinue accommodating you on your educational field trips."

Irregularities in other bids might also be significant, for instance, at a June 7, 1960, board meeting of T.U.S.D. they were discussing the granting of a sizeable construction contract and the business superintendent was heard by me to say to the board, "I might as well tell you how he got the bid." This is quite considerable of a public servant—bids are generally submitted by contractors interested, and normally, the low bidder considered able to perform effectively is granted the contract.

Continuing, the business superintendent said, "He called in, apparently after submitting his bid, and said he had left out \$20,000 in cabinet work." So, he was low bidder.

In addition, the business superintendent added, "He (the contractor) built the

Education Materials Building, and the Towers School . . . He does like to work for us." how noble, these projects alone must have brought hundreds of thousands of dollars to his firm. Continuing, he said, "He'll be offered contract and is obligated or he forfeits his bid bond."

I was again sorrowed by the lack of "Others Present" at the meeting. That term is the designation at the top of the agenda which might include interested citizens and parents.

JACK C. KNIBB

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Douglas W. Torrance, 16820 Kristin Ave., Torrance, Calif.
WITNESS MY hand this 20th day of August, 1960.
DOUGLAS W. TORRANCE
STATE OF CALIFORNIA
COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES
ON THIS 20th day of August, A.D. 1960, before me DONALD A. WOLF, a Notary Public in and for said County and State, residing therein duly commissioned and sworn, personally appeared DOUGLAS W. TORRANCE, known to me to be the person whose name is subscribed to the within instrument, and acknowledged to me that he executed the same.
IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and affixed my official seal the day and year in this certificate first above written.
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